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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/730,162	12/08/2003	Yushi Ono	4444-032065	2307
28389 7590 12/02/2008 THE WEBB LAW FIRM, P.C. 700 KOPPERS BUILDING 436 SEVENTH AVENUE PITTSBURGH, PA 15219				
EXAMINER				
LUKS, JEREMY AUSTIN				
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**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

### Office Action Summary

**Application No.**

10/730,162

**Applicant(s)**

ONO ET AL

**Examiner**

JEREMY LUKS

**Art Unit**

2837

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --  
**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 11 August 2008.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1,2 and 4-20 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1,2 and 4-20 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/5508)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## DETAILED ACTION

### *Drawings*

1. The objection to the drawings made in the Office Action dated 5/9/08 is hereby withdrawn, as the Examiner has found Applicant's arguments persuasive on this matter.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 1, 2, 4, 6-8, 14 and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ward (4,076,098) in view of Mizone (7,123,738) and Nishimura (JP 08337666 A – See machine translation attached to end of JP document). Ward teaches a loudspeaker diaphragm comprising a base layer (Figure 1, #11) having a woven fabric of a fiber impregnated with a thermosetting melanine resin (Col. 1, Lines 51-53), whereby the fiber is coated with a second thermosetting resin (Col. 2, Lines 56-58) containing a thermoplastic elastomer (Col. 2, Lines 5-12). Ward fails to teach wherein the base is made of polyethylene naphthalate, and wherein the polyethylene naphthalate fibers are each an untwisted fiber. Mizone teaches a base layer made of a polyethylene naphthalate fiber impregnated (Col 1, Lines 26-34). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the

apparatus of Ward, with the apparatus of Mizone to provide a speaker diaphragm that is light weight, provides larger internal loss, is excellent in rigidity and provides excellent sound quality. Nishimura teaches a diaphragm (Translation, bottom of [0042 – see speaker cone]) having a woven base made of a plurality of untwisted fibers (Translation, [0045]). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the apparatus of Ward as modified, with the apparatus of Nishimura to improve the impregnating ability of the resin to the fibers, since untwisted fibers allow for a higher cover factor than twisted fibers, of the resin to fibers. This will provide a more even distribution of resin throughout the speaker diaphragm, improving durability and overall performance. Ward, Mizone and Nishimura fail to teach a fiber/resin ratio in the base layer is in the range of 60/40 to 80/20 by weight. However, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to provide a fiber/resin ratio in the base layer in the range of 60/40 to 80/20 by weight, since it has been held that where the general conditions of a claim are disclosed in the prior art, discovering the optimum or working range involves only routine skill in the art. In re Aller, 105 USPQ 233. Further, it has been held to be within the general skill of a worker in the art to select a known material on the basis of its suitability for the intended use as a matter of obvious design choice. In re Leshin, 125 USPQ 416. Still Further, it has been held that a recitation with respect to the manner in which a claimed apparatus is intended to be employed does not differentiate the claimed apparatus from a prior art apparatus satisfying the claimed structural limitations.

With respect to Claim 20, Nishimura teaches wherein each of the plurality of fibers is an untwisted mono-filament (Translation, [0045]). The Examiner notes that it is well known that a monofilament fiber is untwisted as defined by the Merriam-Webster dictionary in the attached NPL document. . Mizone teaches a polyethylene naphthalate material (Col 1, Lines 26-34)

3. Claim 5 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ward (4,076,098) and Mizone (7,123,738) and Nishimura (JP 08337666 A – See machine translation attached to end of JP document), as applied to Claim 4 above, and further in view of Inoue (6,378,649) and Ogura (5,744,761). Ward, Mizone and Nishimura are relied upon for the reasons and disclosures set forth above. Ward, Mizone and Nishimura fail to teach a thermosetting resin as an unsaturated polyester resin and a second thermosetting resin as an epoxy resin or a melamine resin. Inoue discloses a thermosetting resin as an unsaturated polyester resin (Col. 3, Lines 11-12). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the apparatus of Ward as modified, with the apparatus of Inoue for their high elasticity and large internal loss, while providing excellent flexibility. Inoue fails to disclose a second thermosetting resin as an epoxy resin or a melamine resin. Ogura discloses a second thermosetting resin as an epoxy resin or a melamine resin (Col. 5, Lines 27-32). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the apparatus of Ward as modified, with the apparatus of Ogura because they are sufficient to impart stiffness on a cloth after cooling to ambient temperatures.

4. Claims 9-12 and 15-17 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ward (4,076,098) in view of Mizone (7,123,738), Nishimura (JP 08337666 A – See machine translation attached to end of JP document) and Kanada (US 2002/0045040). Ward teaches a loudspeaker diaphragm comprising a base layer (Figure 1, #11) having a woven fabric of a fiber impregnated with a thermosetting melanine resin (Col. 1, Lines 51-53), whereby the fiber is coated with a second thermosetting resin (Col. 2, Lines 56-58); and curing the thermosetting resin, so as to form a base layer (Col. 2, Lines 33-38). Ward fails to teach wherein the base is made of polyethylene naphthalate,; and wherein the polyethylene naphthalate fiber is an untwisted fiber; a thermoplastic elastomer layer; adding the inactive gas, carbon dioxide, in a supercritical state to a molten thermoplastic resin and extruding the mixture of the thermoplastic resin and the inactive gas at prescribed temperature and pressure, so as to form a thermoplastic resin layer; and laminating the base layer and the thermoplastic resin layer; a thermoplastic elastomer layer containing at least one selected from the group consisting of a polyester elastomer, a polyurethane elastomer and a polyolefin elastomer; and a foamed structure, wherein an average diameter of a cell in the foamed structure is 10 to 60  $\mu\text{m}$ . Mizone teaches a base layer made of a polyethylene naphthalate fiber impregnated (Col 1, Lines 26-34). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the apparatus of Ward, with the apparatus of Mizone to provide a speaker diaphragm that is light weight, provides larger internal loss, is excellent in rigidity and provides excellent sound quality. Nishimura teaches a

diaphragm (Translation, bottom of [0042 – see speaker cone]) having a woven base made of a plurality of untwisted fibers (Translation, [0045]). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the apparatus of Ward as modified, with the apparatus of Nishimura to improve the impregnating ability of the resin to the fibers, since untwisted fibers allow for a higher cover factor than twisted fibers, of the resin to fibers. This will provide a more even distribution of resin throughout the speaker diaphragm, improving durability and overall performance.

Kanada teaches a thermoplastic elastomer layer (Page 2, [0014]); adding the inactive gas, carbon dioxide, in a supercritical state to a molten thermoplastic resin and extruding the mixture of the thermoplastic resin and the inactive gas at prescribed temperature and pressure, so as to form a thermoplastic resin layer; and laminating the base layer and the thermoplastic resin layer (Page 2, [0018]); a thermoplastic elastomer layer containing at least one selected from the group consisting of a polyester elastomer, a polyurethane elastomer and a polyolefin elastomer (Page 2, [0014]); and a foamed structure (Page 3, [0021]), wherein an average diameter of a cell in the foamed structure is 10 to 60  $\mu\text{m}$  (Page 3, [0026]). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the apparatus of Ward as modified, with the apparatus of Kanada in order to provide a laminate that is thin and has excellent flexibility, while maintaining a high level of soundproofing characteristics.

5. Claim 13 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ward (4,076,098), Mizone (7,123,738) and Nishimura (JP 08337666 A – See machine translation attached to end of JP document) as applied to claim 1 above, and further in

view of Thomas (EP 0508596 A1). Ward, Mizone and Nishimura are relied upon for the reasons and disclosures set forth above. Ward, Mizone and Nishimura fail to disclose a base layer comprising an unwoven fabric of a liquid crystal polymer. Thomas discloses a base layer comprising an unwoven fabric of a liquid crystal polymer (Col.1, Lines 34-42). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the apparatus of Ward as modified, with the apparatus of Thomas because a liquid crystal polymer provides substantially better resistance to moisture and to elevated temperature than traditional materials, as well as its good fatigue resistance to survive the rigors of high output sound reproduction over extended periods of time.

6. Claims 18 and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ward (4,076,098), Mizone (7,123,738), Nishimura (JP 08337666 A – See machine translation attached to end of JP document) and Kanada (US 2002/0045040) as applied to claim 17 above, and further in view of Yamaji (5,055,341). Ward, Mizone, Nishimura and Kanada are relied upon for the reasons and disclosures set forth above. Ward, Mizone, Nishimura and Kanada fail to teach a thermoplastic resin layer composed of a film; and the thermoplastic elastomer constituting the thermoplastic elastomer layer having a melting point higher than that of a thermoplastic resin constituting the thermoplastic resin layer. Yamaji teaches a thermoplastic resin layer as an intermediate layer composed of a film (Col. 5, Lines 57-61); and the thermoplastic elastomer constituting the thermoplastic elastomer layer having a melting point higher than that of a thermoplastic resin constituting the thermoplastic resin layer (Col. 6, Lines 23-35). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to



combine the apparatus of Ward as modified, with the apparatus of Yamaji because of their lightweight and heat resistant characteristics, as well as high productivity at a low cost.

***Response to Arguments***

7. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1, 2 and 4-20 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection. The Examiner considers the obvious combination of Ward, Mizone, Nishimura, Kanada, Yamaji, Thomas, Inoue and Ogura to teach all of the limitations as claimed by Applicant. Regarding Applicant's incorporation by reference of all previously-filed arguments and comments, the Examiner includes the following responses:

8. In response to applicant's argument that there is no suggestion to combine the references, the examiner recognizes that obviousness can only be established by combining or modifying the teachings of the prior art to produce the claimed invention where there is some teaching, suggestion, or motivation to do so found either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art. See *In re Fine*, 837 F.2d 1071, 5 USPQ2d 1596 (Fed. Cir. 1988), and *In re Jones*, 958 F.2d 347, 21 USPQ2d 1941 (Fed. Cir. 1992). In this case, Claims 1, 2 and 4-20 are directed toward a loudspeaker having a balance between rigidity and internal loss. To achieve this balance, applicant has combined materials and methods well known in the art of general acoustics. Proper motivation has been taken from the references to provide proper obviousness rejections

9. Further, the test for obviousness is not whether the features of a secondary reference may be bodily incorporated into the structure of the primary reference; nor is it that the claimed invention must be expressly suggested in any one or all of the references. Rather, the test is what the combined teachings of the references would have suggested to those of ordinary skill in the art. See *In re Keller*, 642 F.2d 413, 208 USPQ 871 (CCPA 1981).

10. In response to applicant's argument that the prior art is nonanalogous art, it has been held that a prior art reference must either be in the field of applicant's endeavor or, if not, then be reasonably pertinent to the particular problem with which the applicant was concerned, in order to be relied upon as a basis for rejection of the claimed invention. See *In re Oetiker*, 977 F.2d 1443, 24 USPQ2d 1443 (Fed. Cir. 1992). In this case, one of ordinary skill in the art of general acoustics would recognize the obvious combination of the prior art references cited above to achieve desired acoustical and structural characteristics. Further, the Examiner has provided proper motivation take from the references. It is also noted that *KSR International Co. v. Teleflex Inc.*, 82 USPQ 2d 1385 (2007), provides that substitution of one known element (i.e. a polyethylene naphthalate) for another (i.e. Kevlar) to yield a predictable result (i.e. lighter weight, improved internal loss, improved rigidity, ect...) would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art. The KSR decision further supports the Examiners obviousness rejection.

11. In response to applicant's argument that the examiner's conclusion of obviousness is based upon improper hindsight reasoning, it must be recognized that

any judgment on obviousness is in a sense necessarily a reconstruction based upon hindsight reasoning. But so long as it takes into account only knowledge which was within the level of ordinary skill at the time the claimed invention was made, and does not include knowledge gleaned only from the applicant's disclosure, such a reconstruction is proper. See *In re McLaughlin*, 443 F.2d 1392, 170 USPQ 209 (CCPA 1971).

12. In response to applicant's arguments against the references individually, one cannot show nonobviousness by attacking references individually where the rejections are based on combinations of references. See *In re Keller*, 642 F.2d 413, 208 USPQ 871 (CCPA 1981); *In re Merck & Co.*, 800 F.2d 1091, 231 USPQ 375 (Fed. Cir. 1986). Applicant's "secondary considerations" provided on page 5 of Remarks (Arguments dated 11/19/07) are a piecemeal analysis which attempt to show nonobviousness by attacking the references individually. A comparison of the Mizone reference and Applicant's invention will obviously be different, because Mizone does not teach all of the limitations of the claimed invention on its own. This is precisely why the Examiner made an obviousness rejection, combining Mizone with Ward and Ono. Therefor, Applicant's comparison is a moot point because it does not address the combination; rather it focuses on one of multiple combined references.

### ***Conclusion***

13. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Pertinent arts of record relating to loudspeaker diaphragms are disclosed in the PTO-892.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jeremy Luks whose telephone number is (571) 272-2707. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday 8:30-6:00, and alternating Fridays.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Walter Benson can be reached on (571) 272-2227. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Jeremy Luks/  
Examiner, Art Unit 2837

/Walter Benson/  
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 2837